United Nations S/2017/574

Security Council

Distr.: General
5 July 2017

Original: English

Letter dated 5 July 2017 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that, during its presidency of the Security Council of July 2017, China has scheduled an open debate on the topic "Peace and security in Africa: enhancing African capacities in the areas of peace and security", to be tentatively held on Tuesday, 18 July 2017.

In order to help guide the debate, China has prepared a concept note (see annex). I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **Liu** Jieyi
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
People's Republic of China

17-11243 (E) 100717

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Annex to the letter dated 5 July 2017 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Chinese and English]

Concept note

Security Council open debate on peace and security in Africa: enhancing African capacities in the areas of peace and security

1. Background

Under the presidency of China in July, the Security Council plans to hold an open debate on enhancing Africa's capacity in the areas of peace and security.

As the continent with the greatest development potential, Africa is playing a very important role in maintaining world peace and promoting common development. In recent years, African countries have been committed to cooperation, self-reliance, unity and coordination, to firmly upholding the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and to actively promoting African solutions to African problems. They have strengthened their collective security mechanisms and made important contributions to the maintenance of peace and security in Africa, which is widely commended by the international community.

The African Union-led peace operations have become a very important means to respond to conflicts and crises in Africa. The African Union-led operations in Somalia, the Lake Chad basin and the Sahel region have played an important role. In the past 15 years, the partnership between the United Nations and African Union has made considerable progress. The Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the African Union, which expired at the end of 2016, made substantive contributions to enhancing the capacity of the African Union in the areas of peace and security. On 19 April 2017, the United Nations and African Union signed the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for an Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, lifting their cooperation to a higher level. The United Nations has deployed, with the African Union, the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, provided logistical support to the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM), enhanced efforts for a political settlement to hotspot issues in Africa, including in South Sudan, Mali and the Central African Republic, and supported post-conflict reconstruction in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, all of which produced positive progress. The international community has also continued to step up support for the African Union and help African countries build their capacity in peace and security.

With the joint efforts of African countries, the African Union and other regional and subregional organizations as well as the international community, the African continent has maintained overall peace and stability. Nevertheless, Africa is still confronted with serious challenges in peace and security. Terrorist organizations such as Boko Haram, the Lord's Resistance Army and Al-Shabaab are posing an increasing threat. Transnational organized crime in the Sahel region and piracy in the Gulf of Guinea are still rampant. In the face of such challenges, Africa's capacity to prevent and resolve conflicts and maintain peace and stability is still inadequate. The African Union-led peace operations have been struggling with the challenges of the constraints of financial resources, equipment, technology and internal management. The international community should help Africa solve these problems through concerted efforts and continued support.

2. Past actions taken by the Security Council

On 24 May 2016, at the initiative of Egypt, the Security Council held an open debate on United Nations-African Union peace and security cooperation and issued a presidential statement (S/PRST/2016/8) stressing the importance of further strengthening cooperation with the African Union in order to assist in building its capacity in conflict prevention, crisis management and resolution, as well as post-conflict peacebuilding, and encouraging the international community to continue to contribute, and, as appropriate, more actively, in this regard. On 18 November 2016, the Security Council held an open debate on strengthening the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union on issues of peace and security in Africa and adopted resolution 2320 (2016) reaffirming its determination to further enhance peace and security cooperation between the United Nations and African Union. On 25 May 2017, the report of the Secretary-General on options for authorization and support for African Union peace support operations (S/2017/454) was submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 2320 (2016). The report made clear that African Union-led peace operations should be seen as an important tool for the international community to address crises in Africa and to complement United Nations peacekeeping operations. The report also stressed that the international community should help the African Union secure adequate funding for its peace operations and build its capacity to plan, finance, sustain and oversee its peace operations.

3. Objectives and focuses of the open debate

This open debate aims to push for further implementation of the resolutions and presidential statements previously adopted by the Security Council and to emphasize the importance of assisting Africa in enhancing capacity in peace and security. By combing through the difficulties and weak links in Africa's capacity-building in peace and security, the open debate will encourage the international community to improve policies and procedures in order to heed the specific needs of African countries and take specific steps to address the challenges facing Africa, so as to provide concrete and effective support for Africa's peace and security capacity-building. Council members are recommended to focus on the following issues:

(a) Respecting African countries' ownership to solve African security problems is the precondition and foundation for supporting Africa-led peace operations. How could the international community, on the basis of respecting Africa's ownership, better support the African Union and subregional organizations in building their security capacity and enhance their coordination with the United Nations?

(b) The African Union's peace and security capacity-building is confronted with challenges such as insufficient personnel, funding and resources. Continued support and help from the international community is much needed. What financing models could the United Nations consider and adopt to provide adequate, predictable and sustainable sources of funding for the African Union-led peace operations? What channels and approaches could the international community take to provide more support to the African Union collective security mechanism, in particular in training, institution-building and logistical and financial support?

(c) We support African countries' efforts in resolving hotspot issues through peaceful means such as dialogue and consultation, attaching greater importance to youth, women, children, refugees, employment and other social and economic issues, and building their capacity to provide public services and build infrastructure, which are vital to enhancing Africa's capacity for conflict prevention,

conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction. In what areas could the international community strengthen cooperation to solve the root causes of Africa's peace and security threats?

(d) Africa is a continuing focus of the Security Council's deliberations and peacekeeping operations. How could the United Nations improve the efficiency of its peacekeeping operations in Africa? How could the Security Council assist Africa in combating regional terrorism, piracy, transnational organized crimes, human trafficking and other challenges and threats?

4. Format

The meeting will be held in an open debate format in order to allow all United Nations Members to discuss their views on matters pertaining to the item under consideration.